

Application No.: 10/686,812**Docket No.: 2038-302****AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A disposable wearing article, comprising: having a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending between ~~these two~~ said waist regions, each of said regions having an [[inner]] upper surface adapted to face facing a wearer's body and an [[outer]] lower surface adapted to face facing away from said wearer's body; [[,]] and

~~said crotch region being formed on said inner surface with a~~ tubular protrusion [[lying]] extending upwardly from the upper surface of said crotch region, and being sized and positioned in a transversely middle zone of said crotch region for and at least partially surrounding at least one of an anus and a urethral orifice of [[a]] the wearer; [[,]]

wherein

said protrusion comprises a flexible and elastic foamed plastic material; and

said protrusion defines an opening adapted to come into contact with the wearer's body, said opening being enlarged upon compression of said protrusion in a height direction of said protrusion.

2. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, wherein said protrusion consists of ~~comprises~~ a single block of said foamed plastic material.

3. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, wherein a circumferential wall of said protrusion has a top facing said wearer's body and a bottom facing away from said wearer's body and comprises a filler and a cover sheet covering the filler;

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~~defining an outer surface of said protrusion and~~

~~a filler with which an inner space defined by said cover sheet is filled,~~ said filler comprises a plurality of discrete chips of said flexible and elastic foamed plastic material, said chips being arranged in multiple layers one on top another in the height direction of said protrusion.

4. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, wherein said foamed plastic material is polyurethane foam having a cell population in a range of 30 to 150/25 mm, a density in a range of 20 to 120 kg/m³ and an impact resilience in a range of 5 to 30%.

5. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 2, further comprising an absorbent body and a liquid-pervious topsheet overlying and covering said absorbent body, wherein said block of said foamed plastic material is bonded to an upper surface of [[a]] the liquid-pervious sheet covering an absorbent body.

6. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, wherein said protrusion comprises ~~is formed in said crotch region and presents a substantially annular planar shape contoured by~~ a front end segment adjacent ~~located aside toward~~ said front waist region, a rear end segment adjacent ~~located aside toward~~ said rear waist region and transversely opposite lateral segments connecting and extending between said front and rear end segments; and wherein

a height of said protrusion gradually increases toward at least one of said front and rear end segments and is maximal ~~maximizes~~ at an apex on a longitudinal center line of said wearing article.

7. (currently amended) A disposable wearing article, comprising:
a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending between said waist regions, each of said regions having an upper surface adapted to face a wearer's body and a lower surface adapted to face away from said wearer's body; and

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a protrusion extending upwardly from the upper surface of said crotch region, and being sized and positioned for at least partially surrounding at least one of an anus and a urethral orifice of the wearer;

wherein

said protrusion comprises a flexible and elastic foamed plastic material; and

~~The wearing article according to Claim 1, wherein said protrusion has is formed in said crotch region and presents a U-shape consisting of~~ contoured by

a pair of lateral segments extending substantially parallel to a longitudinal center line of said wearing article, and

~~an a curved end segment curved toward located aside to~~ one of said front and rear waist regions and connecting said lateral segments to each other.

8. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, wherein said protrusion is closer to ~~formed in said crotch region so as to be located aside toward~~ said rear waist region than to said front waist region.

9. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, comprising wherein a pair of said protrusions each being sized and positioned for surrounding only one of the anus and the urethral orifice of the wearer, wherein ~~are formed in said crotch region so as to be located aside toward said front waist region and said rear waist region, respectively, and said protrusions are centered on aligned with each other in a longitudinal center line direction of~~ said crotch region.

10. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, wherein said protrusion extends over said crotch region further into both said front waist region and said rear waist region for surrounding both the anus and the urethral orifice of the wearer.

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11. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, further comprising an absorbent body and a liquid-impervious backsheet underlying said absorbent body;
said tubular protrusion being bonded to an upper surface of said absorbent body;
said absorbent body comprising therein a through hole which is aligned with the tubular protrusion and defines together with the tubular protrusion a pocket; and
a portion of said backsheet being exposed, at a bottom of said pocket, through said opening and said tubular protrusion wherein a portion of said crotch region surrounded by said protrusion forms a pocket bulging out from an inner side toward an outer side of said diaper.

12. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 1, wherein the circumferential wall ~~said apex of~~ said protrusion comprises
inner and outer surfaces; and
a top surface connecting said inner and outer surfaces, said top surface describes a circular
are being convex upward as viewed in a cross-section of said protrusion.

13. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 3, wherein said chips make up 100 to 60 wt% of said filler.

14. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 3, wherein each of said chips has a maximum diameter in a range of 1 to 20 mm.

15. (currently amended) The wearing article according to ~~Claim 3~~ claim 13, wherein said filler further comprises thermoplastic synthetic fibers which make up at most [[0 to]] 40 wt%
of said filler.

16. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 3, wherein a [[said]] maximum diameter of [[said]] the chips in each of said layers progressively increases

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from an upper one of said layers ~~said apex~~ toward a lower one of said layers ~~said bottom of said protrusion~~.

17. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 3, wherein a density of said chips progressively increases downwardly in the height direction ~~from said apex toward said bottom~~ of said protrusion.

18. (currently amended) The wearing article according to [[Claim]] claim 3, further comprising wherein a layer of [[said]] thermoplastic synthetic fiber that underlies said chips in a vicinity of [[said]] a bottom of said protrusion, wherein [[and]] said layer of thermoplastic synthetic fiber has a bending stiffness in a range of 0.98 to 5.0 N/25.4 mm.

19. (new) The wearing article according to claim 3, wherein said filler further comprises thermoplastic synthetic fibers mixed with said chips to fill gaps between adjacent said chips.

20. (new) The wearing article according to claim 3, wherein said chips have different sizes and irregular shapes.

21. (new) The wearing article according to claim 7, wherein said protrusion comprises a U shape wall having inner and outer surfaces and a top surface connecting said inner and outer surfaces;

said wall partially surrounding a middle zone of said crotch region, and extending obliquely upwardly from the upper surface of said crotch region and radially away from said middle zone of said crotch region.

22. (new) A disposable wearing article, comprising:

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a front waist region, a rear waist region and a crotch region extending between said waist regions, each of said regions having an upper surface adapted to face a wearer's body and a lower surface adapted to face away from said wearer's body;

an absorbent body, a liquid-impervious backsheet underlying said absorbent body, and a liquid-pervious topsheet overlying said absorbent body;

a protrusion extending upwardly from an upper surface of the topsheet in said crotch region, and being sized and positioned for at least partially surrounding at least one of an anus and a urethral orifice of the wearer;

wherein

said protrusion comprises a flexible and elastic foamed plastic material; and

said absorbent body comprises therein a through hole which is aligned with the protrusion and defines together with the protrusion a pocket; and

a portion of said backsheet is exposed, at a bottom of said pocket, through said opening and said protrusion.